TOYOTA

TOYOTA MOTOR NORTH AMERICA, INC.

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02V-268 ①of③

October 1, 2002

Mr. Kenneth N. Weinstein
Associate Administrator for Safety Assurance – NSA-01
National Highway Traffic Safety Administration
400 Seventh Street, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20590

Re: Toyota Echo Rear Brake Tube
Part 573, Defect Information Report

Dear Mr. Weinstein:

In accordance with the requirements of the National Traffic and Motor Vehicle Safety Act of 1966 and 49 CFR Part 573, on behalf of Toyota Motor Corporation ["TMC"], we hereby submit a Defect Information Report concerning a safety recall of certain 2001 and 2002 model year Toyota Echo vehicles to address a possible rear brake tube problem.

Should you have any questions about this report, please contact Mr. Michiteru Kato at (202) 775-1707.

Sincerely,

TOYOTA MOTOR NORTH AMERICA, INC.

Chris Tinto
Director

CT:mk
Attachment

DEFECT INFORMATION REPORT

02V-268 ②of③

1. Vehicle Manufacturer Name:

Toyota Motor Corporation ["TMC"]
1, Toyota-cho, Toyota-city,
Aichi-ken, 471-8571 Japan

Affiliated U.S. Sales Company

Toyota Motor Sales, USA, Inc. ["TMS"]
19001 South Western Avenue
Torrance, CA 90509

2. Identification of Affected Vehicles:

Based on production records, we have determined the affected vehicle population as set forth in the table below.

Make/ Car Line	Model Year	Manufac-turer	VIN		Production Period
			VDS	VIS	
Toyota Echo	2001 - 2002	TMC	AT123	0123169 - 0235496	October 12, 2000 through February 27, 2002
			AT183	0129481 - 0230525	
			BT123	0123168 - 0235498 5021186 - 5022523	
			BT183	0123286 - 0233887	

Note: Although the involved vehicles are within the above VIN ranges, not all vehicles in these ranges were sold in the U.S.

3. Total Number of Vehicles Potentially Affected:

59,394

4. Percentage of Vehicles Estimated to Actually Experience Malfunction:

Unknown, but very low

5. Description of Problem:

If the vehicle is driven under repeated start and stop operation in extremely low ambient temperatures and in deep snow, there is a possibility that snow may accumulate in large quantities inside the rear wheel and freeze. Due to the shape of the rear brake tube, the snow frozen inside the wheel may contact the rear brake tube during wheel rotation. In the worst case, if this condition occurs frequently, the rear brake tube could be damaged, which could result in leakage of brake fluid, causing a decrease in brake effectiveness.

6. Chronology of Principal Events:

January through August 2002
TMC received information from the Finland market regarding three cases of breakage of a rear brake tube installed on Yaris vehicles that were used as mail delivery vans. The brake tube was recovered for investigation, and it was found that the tube had broken at the connection with the brake hose, due to metal fatigue by a repeated application of an external force.

TMC subsequently investigated the operating environment of the mail vans in Finland, and found that the vans are frequently operated in very low ambient temperatures, in heavy snow, under a driving cycle that includes repeated stop and starts. Further investigation determined that this operating condition could lead to an accumulation and freezing of snow in large quantities inside the rear wheel, and that the frozen snow may come in contact with the rear brake tube when the wheel rotates. If this condition occurs repeatedly and frequently, in the worst case, the rear brake tube could be damaged.

Based on the above investigation, TMC changed the shape of the rear brake tube to prevent interference with accumulated frozen snow inside the rear wheel.

Although there are no reported cases other than Finland's, TMC conducted a field investigation in other countries where frequent extreme cold and snowy conditions are found, to identify the possibility of occurrence of this failure outside the unique operating environment found in the mail delivery vans. As a result of the investigation, while no information regarding damage of the rear brake tube was obtained, TMC continued its study further to identify factors of this failure.

September 2002
In September, after further study, it was concluded that there is a possibility of occurrence of this failure on Echo vehicles (which share a platform with the Yaris) under unique operating conditions, such as those found in extremely cold and snowy areas. Therefore, Toyota decided to conduct a voluntary safety recall campaign.

This safety recall campaign will also be conducted in Europe, Canada, and Japan.

7. Description of Corrective Repair Action:

All known owners of the subject vehicles will be notified by first class mail to return their vehicles to a Toyota dealer for replacement of the rear brake tubes.

8. Recall Schedule:

Mailing of the owner notifications will commence early November and be completed before the end of November 2002.

Copies of the owner notification and dealer instructions will be submitted as soon as they are available.